

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 15077 031613Z

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INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 15077 031613Z

TAGS: PFOR, IN UR, XB

SUBJ: BREZHNEV IN INDIA: ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY

1. SUMMARY: BREZHNEV MADE HIS EXPECTED PITCH FOR ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY DURING INDIA VISIT, AND CAME AWAY WITH CAUTIOUS INDIAN SUPPORT FOR JOINT EFFORTS TOWARD ASIAN STABILITY BUT NO MENTION OF COLLECTIVE SECURITY PER SE. SOVIETS CAN PORTRAY THIS AS FORWARD MEMENTUM AND ARE EVIDENTLY PREPARED TO BIDE THEIR TIME. END SUMMARY.

2. BREZHNEV'S SPEECH TO THE INDIAN PARLIAMENT CONFIRMED THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM THAT HE WOULD USE HIS INDIA VISIT TO BALLYHOO HIS PROPOSAL FOR A SYSTEM OF ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY. HE HAD NOTHING NOVEL TO SAY ABOUT THE PROPOSAL ITSELF, ARGUING AS HE DID LAST AUGUST IN ALMA-ATA THAT THE TIME IS RIPE AND THE PROCESS CAN BE SEEN AS AN EVOLUTION OF THE 1955 BANDUNG PRINCIPLES. IN APPEALING FOR EARLY DISCUSSION OF THE CONCEPT (PRESUMABLY AT AN ASIAN CONFERENCE), BREZHNEV EXPRESSED NEW INTEREST IN OTHER PEOPLE'S IDEAS FOR STABILITY IN THE REGION, INCLUDING THE MALAYSIAN SEA NEUTRALIZATION PROPOSAL AND THE SRI LANKA INDIAN OCEAN PEACE ZONE. HE MADE A SPECIAL BOW TO THE NEED FOR EXAMINING THE ECONOMIC SIDE OF THE MATTER, A POINT REPEATEDLY STRESSED BY INDIA BUT RATHER NEGLECTED IN SOVIET STATEMENTS HERETOFORE.

3. WE ASSUME LANGUAGE OF INDO-SOVIET JOINT STATEMENT WAS ALREADY LOCKED UP BY TIME BREZHNEV MADE HIS SPEECH, AND HE KNOW THE MAGIC WORDS "ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY" WOULD NOT APPEAR IN IT. IT WAS NONETHELESS USEFUL TO HIM TO HAVE AN ASIAN AUDIENCE FOR HIS MESSAGE, AND THERE IS SOME COMFORT FOR SOVIETS IN FACT THAT JOINT STATEMENT ENDORSED SET OF PRINCIPLES IN ASIAN CONTEXT WHICH ARE INDENTICAL WITH BREZHNEV'S FIRST ILLUSTRATIVE LIST OF PRINCIPLES FOR ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY IN AN MARCH 1972 SPEECH. FINALLY, BY STRETCHING A POINT, SOVIETS CAN CONSTRUE PASSAGE ON "JOINT EFFORTS" OF ALL STATES IN REGION TOWARD PEACE AND STABILITY AS DE FACTO INDIAN ACCEPTANCE OF THE APPROACH ADVOCATED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 15077 031613Z

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4. ALTHOUGH SOVIET MEDIA HAVE WORKED OVERTIME TO PORTRAY BREZHNEV VISIT TO INDIA AS AUSPICIOUS EVENT IN PROCESS OF ASIAN DETENTE, IT REMAINS OPEN QUESTION WHERE SOVIETS GO FROM HERE ON ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY. GERMAN COLLEAGUE QUERIED SOVIET MFA POLICY PLANNING OFFICIAL KOTENYOV ABOUT THIS AND WAS TOLD THAT

SOVIETS ARE STILL IN PROCESS OF BUILDING SUPPORT FOR
"PRINCIPLES," RATHER THAN TRYING TO ENGINEER CONFERENCE.
WE ARE INCLINED TO AGREE THAT SOVIETS HAVE NO TIME-
TABLE IN MIND, WHICH MEANS THAT HALF LOAF BREZHEV
BROUGHT HOME FROM INDIA REPRESENTS ADEQUATE PROGRESS
AT THIS STAGE. TO BORROW THE APT WORDS OF THE
DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN, ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY IS
STILL A CLOUD IN THE SKY NO LARGER THAN A MAN'S HAND.
INCIDENTALLY, WE THOUGH SPOKEMAN'S LUKE-COOL
TREATMENT OF THE CONCEPT IS JUST RIGHT FOR OUR
PUBLIC POSITION AT THIS TIME.
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